

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A server computer sending a virtual character to a client computer through a network, comprising:

a communication circuit connected to said network for communicating with said client computer;

an identification circuit connected to said communication circuit for identifying a user using said client computer based on data received from said client computer;

a providing circuit connected to said communication circuit for providing a service to said user according to a request from said user;

a history storage circuit connected to said providing circuit for storing a history of services provided to said user;

a storage circuit for storing data representing the virtual character changeable in figure based on said history of services provided; and

a sending circuit connected to said communication circuit, said identification circuit, said history storage circuit and said storage circuit, for sending the data representing the virtual character having its figure changed based on the history of services provided to the user identified by said identification circuit, to the client computer used by said identified user.

2. The server computer according to claim 1, wherein said history storage circuit includes a storage circuit that stores the history of services provided to said user as history points that are calculated by adding up points prescribed for each kind of said services, and said virtual character is changeable in figure based on said history points.

3. The server computer according to claim 1, further comprising a determining circuit connected to said communication circuit for determining a data format with which said client computer is able to output, wherein

said sending circuit includes a circuit that transforms the data representing the virtual character having its figure changed based on the

history of services provided to the user identified by said identification circuit to said data format determined by said determining circuit, to send to the client computer used by said identified user.

4. The server computer according to claim 1, wherein
said providing circuit includes a circuit for providing information to said user according to a request from said user, and

5 said history storage circuit includes a circuit for storing the history of services provided to said user after classifying the services within the history into categories,

10 said server computer further comprising a preference information storage circuit connected to said history storage circuit for generating and storing preference information of said user based on said history with the services classified into the categories.

5. The server computer according to claim 4, wherein said storage circuit includes a circuit for storing data including a plurality of virtual characters, said plurality of virtual characters being changeable in figures based on said history of services provided,

5 said server computer further comprising a character select circuit connected to said preference information storage circuit and said storage circuit for selecting one of said plurality of virtual characters based on said user preference information, wherein

10 said sending circuit includes a circuit for sending the data representing the virtual character selected by said character select circuit having its figure changed based on the history of services provided to the user identified by said identification circuit, to the client computer used by said identified user.

6. The server computer according to claim 4, further comprising:

a motion data storage circuit for storing data for implementation of a motion of said virtual character in the client computer, said motion being for displaying a questionnaire to a user at said client computer and for sending

5 an answer to the questionnaire back to said server computer; and
a user select circuit connected to said preference information storage
circuit for selecting a user based on the preference information stored in said
preference information storage circuit and a content of said questionnaire,
wherein

10 said sending circuit includes a circuit, when the user selected by said
user select circuit is the user identified by said identification circuit, for
sending the data representing the virtual character having its figure
changed based on the history of services provided to said selected user and
the data for implementation of said motion stored in said motion data
15 storage circuit, to the client computer used by said selected user.

7. The server computer according to claim 4, further comprising:
a motion data storage circuit for storing data for implementation of a
motion of said virtual character in the client computer, said motion being for
prompting a user to access advertisement information; and

5 a user select circuit connected to said preference information storage
circuit for selecting a user based on the preference information stored in said
preference information storage circuit and a content of said advertisement
information, wherein

said sending circuit includes a circuit, when the user selected by said
10 user select circuit is the user identified by said identification circuit, for
sending the data representing the virtual character having its figure
changed based on the history of services provided to said selected user and
the data for implementation of said motion stored in said motion data
storage circuit, to the client computer used by said selected user.

8. The server computer according to claim 1, further comprising a
motion data storage circuit for storing data for implementation of a motion of
said virtual character in the client computer, wherein

said sending circuit includes a circuit for sending the data
5 representing the virtual character having its figure changed based on the
history of services provided to the user identified by said identification

circuit and the data for implementation of said motion stored in said motion data storage circuit, to the client computer used by said identified user.

9. The server computer according to claim 8, wherein said history storage circuit includes a circuit that stores the history of services provided to said user as history points obtained by adding up points prescribed for each kind of said services, and

5 the motion to be implemented in said client computer is determined according to said history points.

10. The server computer according to claim 8, wherein said motion is determined according to said history of services provided and is for displaying a questionnaire to a user in said client computer and for sending an answer input by said user back to said server computer.

11. A server computer sending a virtual character to a client computer through a network, comprising:

communication means connected to said network for communicating with said client computer;

5 identification means connected to said communication means for identifying a user using said client computer based on data received from said client computer;

providing means connected to said communication means for providing a service to said user according to a request from said user;

10 history storage means connected to said providing means for storing a history of services provided to said user;

storage means for storing data representing the virtual character changeable in figure based on said history of services provided; and

15 sending means connected to said communication means, said identification means, said history storage means and said storage means, for sending the data representing the virtual character having its figure changed based on the history of services provided to the user identified by said identification means, to the client computer used by said identified

user.

12. The server computer according to claim 11, wherein said history storage means includes means for storing the history of services provided to said user as history points that are calculated by adding up points prescribed for each kind of said services, and said virtual character is changeable in figure based on said history points.

13. The server computer according to claim 11, further comprising determining means connected to said communication means for determining a data format with which said client computer is able to output, wherein said sending means includes means for transforming the data representing the virtual character having its figure changed based on the history of services provided to the user identified by said identification means to said data format determined by said determining means, to send to the client computer used by said identified user.

14. The server computer according to claim 11, wherein said providing means includes means for providing information to said user according to a request from said user, and said history storage means includes means for storing the history of services provided to said user after classifying the services within the history into categories, said server computer further comprising preference information storage means connected to said history storage means for generating and storing preference information of said user based on said history with the services classified into the categories.

15. The server computer according to claim 14, wherein said storage means includes means for storing data including a plurality of virtual characters, said plurality of virtual characters being changeable in figures based on said history of services provided, said server computer further comprising character select means

connected to said preference information storage means and said storage means for selecting one of said plurality of virtual characters based on said user preference information, wherein

10 said sending means includes means for sending the data representing the virtual character selected by said character select means having its figure changed based on the history of services provided to the user identified by said identification means, to the client computer used by said identified user.

16. The server computer according to claim 14, further comprising:
motion data storage means for storing data for implementation of a motion of said virtual character in the client computer, said motion being for displaying a questionnaire to a user at said client computer and for sending
5 an answer to the questionnaire back to said server computer; and

user select means connected to said preference information storage means for selecting a user based on the preference information stored in said preference information storage means and a content of said questionnaire, wherein

10 said sending means includes means, when the user selected by said user select means is the user identified by said identification means, for sending the data representing the virtual character having its figure changed based on the history of services provided to said selected user and the data for implementation of said motion stored in said motion data
15 storage means, to the client computer used by said selected user.

17. The server computer according to claim 14, further comprising:
motion data storage means for storing data for implementation of a motion of said virtual character in the client computer, said motion being for prompting a user to access advertisement information; and

5 user select means connected to said preference information storage means for selecting a user based on the preference information stored in said preference information storage means and a content of said advertisement information, wherein

10 said sending means includes means, when the user selected by said user select means is the user identified by said identification means, for sending the data representing the virtual character having its figure changed based on the history of services provided to said selected user and the data for implementation of said motion stored in said motion data storage means, to the client computer used by said selected user.

18. The server computer according to claim 11, further comprising motion data storage means for storing data for implementation of a motion of said virtual character in the client computer, wherein

5 said sending means includes means for sending the data representing the virtual character having its figure changed based on the history of services provided to the user identified by said identification means and the data for implementation of said motion stored in said motion data storage means, to the client computer used by said identified user.

19. The server computer according to claim 18, wherein said history storage means includes means for storing the history of services provided to said user as history points obtained by adding up points prescribed for each kind of said services, and

5 the motion to be implemented in said client computer is determined according to said history points.

20. The server computer according to claim 18, wherein said motion is determined according to said history of services provided and is for displaying a questionnaire to a user in said client computer and for sending an answer input by said user back to said server computer.

21. A virtual character sending method in a server computer for sending a virtual character to a client computer through a network, comprising the steps of:

5 identifying a user using said client computer based on data received from said client computer;

providing said user with a service according to a request from said user;

storing a history of services provided to said user;

10 preparing data representing the virtual character changeable in figure based on said history of services provided; and

sending the data representing the virtual character having its figure changed based on the history of services provided to the user identified in said step of identifying the user, to the client computer used by said identified user.

22. The virtual character sending method according to claim 21, wherein said step of storing the history of services includes the step of storing the history of services provided to said user as history points that are calculated by adding up points prescribed for each kind of said services, and
5 said virtual character is changeable in figure based on said history points.

23. The virtual character sending method according to claim 21, further comprising the step of determining a data format with which said client computer is able to output, wherein
5 said step of sending the data representing the virtual character includes the step of transforming the data representing the virtual character having its figure changed based on the history of services provided to the user identified in said step of identifying the user to said data format determined in said step of determining the data format, to send to the client computer used by said identified user.

24. The virtual character sending method according to claim 21, wherein
said step of providing the service includes the step of providing information to said user according to a request from said user,
5 said step of storing the history of services provided includes the step of storing the history of services provided to said user after classifying the services within the history into categories,

10 said virtual character sending method further comprising the step of
generating and storing preference information of said user based on said
history with the services classified into the categories.

25. The virtual character sending method according to claim 24,
wherein said step of preparing the data representing the virtual character
includes the step of preparing data including a plurality of virtual
characters, said plurality of virtual characters being changeable in figures
5 based on said history of services provided,

 said virtual character sending method further comprising the step of
selecting one of said plurality of virtual characters based on said user
preference information, wherein

10 said step of sending the data representing the virtual character
includes the step of sending the data representing the virtual character
selected in said step of selecting one of the virtual characters having its
figure changed based on the history of services provided to the user
identified in said step of identifying the user, to the client computer used by
said identified user.

26. The virtual character sending method according to claim 24,
further comprising the steps of:

 preparing data for implementation of a motion of said virtual
character in the client computer, said motion being for displaying a
5 questionnaire to a user at said client computer and for sending an answer to
the questionnaire back to said server computer; and

 selecting a user based on the preference information stored in said
step of storing the preference information and a content of said
questionnaire, wherein

10 said step of sending the data representing the virtual character
includes the step, when the user selected in said step of selecting the user is
the user identified in said step of identifying the user, of sending the data
representing the virtual character having its figure changed based on the
history of services provided to said selected user and the data for

15 implementation of said motion prepared in said step of preparing the data
for implementation of the motion, to the client computer used by said
selected user.

27. The virtual character sending method according to claim 24,
further comprising the steps of:

preparing data for implementation of a motion of said virtual
character in the client computer, said motion being for prompting a user to
5 access advertisement information; and

selecting a user based on the preference information stored in said
step of storing the preference information and a content of said
advertisement information, wherein

said step of sending the data representing the virtual character
10 includes the step, when the user selected in said step of selecting the user is
the user identified in said step of identifying the user, of sending the data
representing the virtual character having its figure changed based on the
history of services provided to the selected user and the data for
implementation of said motion prepared in said step of preparing the data
15 for implementation of the motion, to the client computer used by said
selected user.

28. The virtual character sending method according to claim 21,
further comprising the step of preparing data for implementation of a
motion of said virtual character in the client computer, wherein

said step of sending the data representing the virtual character
5 includes the step of sending the data representing the virtual character
having its figure changed based on the history of services provided to the
user identified in said step of identifying the user and the data for
implementation of said motion prepared in said step of preparing the data
for implementation of the motion, to the client computer used by said
10 identified user.

29. The virtual character sending method according to claim 28,

wherein said step of storing the history of services provided includes the step of storing the history of services provided to said user as history points obtained by adding up points prescribed for each kind of said services, and
5 the motion to be implemented in said client computer is determined according to said history points.

30. The virtual character sending method according to claim 28, wherein said motion is determined according to said history of services provided and is for displaying a questionnaire to a user in said client computer and for sending an answer input by said user back to said server
5 computer.

31. A computer readable recording medium recording a program for implementation of a virtual character sending method in a server computer for sending a virtual character to a client computer through a network, the virtual character sending method comprising the steps of:
5 identifying a user using said client computer based on data received from said client computer;
providing said user with a service according to a request from said user;
storing a history of services provided to said user;
10 preparing data representing the virtual character changeable in figure based on said history of services provided; and
sending the data representing the virtual character having its figure changed based on the history of services provided to the user identified in said step of identifying the user, to the client computer used by said
15 identified user.

32. The recording medium according to claim 31, wherein said step of storing the history of services provided includes the step of storing the history of services provided to said user as history points that are calculated by adding up points prescribed for each kind of said services, and said
5 virtual character is changeable in figure based on said history points.

33. The recording medium according to claim 31, wherein said virtual character sending method further comprises the step of determining a data format with which said client computer is able to output, and

5 said step of sending the data representing the virtual character includes the step of transforming the data representing the virtual character having its figure changed based on the history of services provided to the user identified in said step of identifying the user to said data format determined in said step of determining the data format, to send to the client computer used by said identified user.

34. The recording medium according to claim 31, wherein said step of providing the service includes the step of providing information to said user according to a request from said user,

5 said step of storing the history of services provided includes the step of storing the history of services provided to said user after classifying the services within the history into categories, and

said virtual character sending method further comprises the step of generating and storing preference information of said user based on said history with the services classified into the categories.

35. The recording medium according to claim 34, wherein said step of preparing the data representing the virtual character includes the step of preparing data including a plurality of virtual characters, said plurality of virtual characters being changeable in figures based on said history of services provided,

5 said virtual character sending method further comprises the step of selecting one of said plurality of virtual characters based on said user preference information, and

10 said step of sending the data representing the virtual character includes the step of sending the data representing the virtual character selected in said step of selecting one of the virtual characters having its figure changed based on the history of services provided to the user identified in said step of identifying the user, to the client computer used by

15 implementation of said motion prepared in said step of preparing the data
for implementation of the motion, to the client computer used by said
selected user.

38. The recording medium according to claim 31, wherein said
virtual character sending method further comprises the step of preparing
data for implementation of a motion of said virtual character in the client
computer, and

5 said step of sending the data representing the virtual character
includes the step of sending the data representing the virtual character
having its figure changed based on the history of services provided to the
user identified in said step of identifying the user and the data for
implementation of said motion prepared in said step of preparing the data
10 for implementation of the motion, to the client computer used by said
identified user.

39. The recording medium according to claim 38, wherein said step
of storing the history of services provided includes the step of storing the
history of services provided to said user as history points obtained by adding
up points prescribed for each kind of said services, and

5 the motion to be implemented in said client computer is determined
according to said history points.

40. The recording medium according to claim 38, wherein said
motion is determined according to said history of services provided and is for
displaying a questionnaire to a user in said client computer and for sending
an answer input by said user back to said server computer.